NN/LM
National Network of Libraries of Medicine
New England Region

New England Sounding Line

Rest, Relaxation and Renewal!
by John A. Stey, Associate Director

We made it through June but the price was high in effort and endurance. The last two months in particular have been exhausting for the NER staff. Upon returning from MLA and spring consortia meetings, the NER staff in conjunction with staff of the Lyman Maynard Stowe Library at the University of Connecticut Health Center began the process of responding to the National Library of Medicine's Request for Proposal for Regional Medical Library Services in New England during the period 2001-2006. This was a formidable task given the due date of June 30th, but we made it.

The RML Directors' Meeting in Vancouver was informative especially in the area of consumer health programming. The rollout of DOCLINE® 2000 in a few weeks will bring closure to a period of change at NLM which included transitioning to PubMed and planning for Y2K. Information on NLM's Long Range Plan 2000-2005 can be found at **http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/plan/**. Funding for NIH research is having difficulty keeping up with advances in science according to Kent Smith. The NLM budget of $230.1 million is up 7.5%. Searches to NLM databases have gone from 7 million to over 250 million with 30% of those being done by the public. Before the end of the year MEDLINE*plus*® expects to have covered 400 plus health topics. PubMed Central® continues to evolve at a slow pace due to publishers treading lightly on new ground. NLM will begin the process of adding 225,000 sq.ft. to the main library. Becky Lyon, former National Network Office (NNO) Head will lead a team to facilitate the new addition. Angela Ruffin, Outreach Librarian, has been appointed to succeed Becky Lyon as Head of the NNO.

MLA was a rewarding experience for those fortunate enough to travel to Vancouver. Please contact Cheryl Sinkler at 1-800-338-7657 or by e-mail at sinkler@nso.uchc.edu to borrow any of the tapes listed in the insert. Of particular note was the Janet Doe Lecture "The Road Not Taken" written by Judy Messerle of the Countway Library of Harvard Medical School and delivered by Lucretia McClure. We congratulate Judy and Lucretia and 20 others from New England who participated in MLA 2000 by submitting papers and/or posters. *(See page 6)*

The NER continues to recruit for a new Technology Coordinator and will be distributing a new Transaction File Builder on the EFTS web site. An announcement on the NEHSL-L list will be posted when it becomes available.

After the DOCLINE rollout, we will begin planning for the NAHSL meeting in Newport, RI. The outreach proposals are being reviewed by a RAC committee and we hope to have an announcement of awards later this summer.

Many thanks to those who contributed letters of support and suggestions for the contract renewal process. We expect a first set of questions from NLM on the proposal in early fall and possibly a site visit as well. In the future, responding to an RFP of this magnitude will hopefully be done electronically.

Have a safe and restful summer, the NER staff will do its best to relax as well.

**NN/LM NEW ENGLAND
REGION STAFF**

Ralph Arcari
Director
arcari@nso.uchc.edu
•
John Stey
Associate Director
stey@nso.uchc.edu
•
Marion Levine
Assistant Director
levine@nso.uchc.edu
•
Ed Donnald
Network Coordinator
donnald@nso.uchc.edu
•
Nancy Putnam
Outreach Coordinator
nputnam@nso2.uchc.edu
•
Daniel Dollar
Education Coordinator
dollar@nso.uchc.edu
•
Pam White
*Consumer Health
Coordinator*
pwhite@nso.uchc.edu
•
vacant
Technology Coordinator
staff@nnlmner.uchc.edu
•
Elizabeth Clark
Admin. Assistant
eclark@nso.uchc.edu
•
Cheryl Sinkler
Admin. Assistant
sinkler@nso.uchc.edu

HealthInfoQuest
by Nancy Press, Consumer Heatlh Coordinator, NN/LM PNR
reprinted with permission from the Dragonfly

The National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NN/LM™) is pleased to announce the availability of a web-based tutorial for librarians and others who provide information on consumer health questions: HealthInfoQuest **http://www.nnlm.nlm.nih.gov/healthinfoquest**/.

HealthInfoQuest was developed with funding from the National Library of Medicine under a subcontract with NN/LM (Pacific Northwest Region). It is a response to requests from public libraries across the country for web-based training on how to find authoritative and reliable health information on the World Wide Web.

Pathfinders are a time-honored tradition in public libraries. HealthInfoQuest pathfinders are designed for public librarians and health information specialists whose learning style is primarily visual or graphic. HealthInfoQuest pathfinders encourage users to practice finding answers to common consumer health and complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) questions while reinforcing information-seeking processes which will assist them in similar situations in the future.

HealthInfoQuest is the result of a collaboration between Maureen Carleton, Medical Reference Specialist with the King County Library System, and Barbara Macfadden, Instructional Technology Developer at the University of Washington's Health Sciences Center for Educational Resources. They have created a series of Web-based pathfinders designed to offer an intuitive interface to health information which can be accessed at the point of need for independent learning or review. The CAM pathfinders were created by Jane Saxton, Reference Librarian at Bastyr University Library, located in Kenmore, Washington, an accredited, private institution, internationally recognized as a pioneer in the study of natural medicine.

Understanding Electronic Images
by Ed Donnald, Network Coordinator

Do you know the difference between DUI and DPI? Does resolution mean to you those things you break on January 2nd? If you're not thinking of electronic images with those terms, then you may want to check out the website at **http://www.scantips.com**. Although the site is devoted to scanning and makes it well known that you can purchase the book for $21.95, there is still a lot of useful information presented in a clear, easy to understand format. You'll learn that an image scanned at 75 dots per inch, that's the dpi :-), will appear on your computer screen one size but print out at another size. You'll also understand why the image will print at the same size whether it's printed at 100 dpi or 300 dpi. The list of topics include:
- Video Resolution-How much to scan?
- Printing Resolution-Scaling and Resampling
- Printer Resolution-How much to scan?
- Photo Resolution-How much can we scan?
- Graphic file formats-Which format to use?

If you come across other sites that you think do a nice job of lifting the mystery behind electronic imaging, let me know.

Education Notes-Lighting the Candle: Librarians as Teachers
by Daniel Dollar, NER Education Coordinator

When I became a librarian, I imagined doing some instruction, but I did not expect teaching would be a major part of my professional work. Now as the NN/LM NER Education Coordinator, instruction is one of my core duties.

Librarians are being pulled more and more out of the library into the classroom. In this article I will summarize some of my teaching experiences and encourage you to take the plunge, if you have not already, into the classroom.

First, I want to encourage you to do instruction because it's fun and results in a lot of satisfaction, both personal and professional. In addition, it is a great way to extend the library's services and visibility. As librarians we have extensive knowledge about information resources and technology that we can share in a structured fashion. You are already providing instruction in your library to individuals and small groups, so with some preparation you can teach larger groups. Remember you are working with adults who want to learn and will be receptive and appreciative of your efforts.

Assess Needs
Start with assessing the needs and abilities of your students. What are their perceived needs and experiences with the subject matter to be taught? Your own experience can guide you. If you are developing a session for the healthcare staff at your hospital, you probably already know a great deal about their comfort levels with using technology, as well as some common concerns about locating health information.

You can supplement your knowledge by using surveys and/or meeting with individuals to learn of their perceived educational needs. While assessing needs, look for people to collaborate with in providing instruction, such as a CME Coordinator. For example, your class on evidence-based medicine (EBM) resources could be greatly strengthened if your co-instructor was a physician who is using EBM principles in his or her practice.

Develop Objectives
Once you have assessed the participants' educational needs, you can develop learning objectives. You may start with a goal for the class, such as "participants will be able to access biomedical information…" However, you will want to expand that goal into specific learning objectives. For example, in my PubMed courses I generally have as an objective, "participants will learn of three resources for help when searching PubMed in the future."

There are no hard and fast rules on the number of learning objectives. You should be guided by what you have to teach and how much time you have. I find, however, that four to six objectives are usually enough. Again, make the objectives specific so participants can easily say on their evaluations whether or not the objective was met.

Instruction Method
Give some thought to the method(s) that you will use to teach the course. Lectures are an efficient way to provide instruction, but you may be able to enhance them with a live Internet connection or PowerPoint presentation. Consider hands-on training, if you have access to a computer lab. Hands-on training using practice exercises is a powerful way to provide instruction on electronic resources. Think creatively, other instructional modes such as discussion groups or even role-playing may be appropriate.

You will also need to think about the implications of any instruction method that you choose. For example, if you are doing hands-on instruction with a large group, you may want to have another person present to assist participants with the inevitable computer problems during your lecture, and to help cover the room during the hands-on segments.

If you are using any technology, consider what you will do if it fails. Have an overhead projector and

transparencies at the ready in case your laptop or LCD data projector goes on the blink. If you are using an Internet connection, prepare a backup option in case you lose your connectivity during the session. I have rarely needed to use a backup in all my travels, but it does give me peace of mind to have one just in case.

Handouts
A key to successful training is the quality of your handouts. Well-edited materials give your partici- pants clearly organized information. The purpose is to decrease the amount of note taking by partici- pants and provide something for them to refer to after the course. If you are teaching a commercial electronic resource, contact the vendor for training materials, usually they will provide copies for distribution. NLM and NN/LM training materials can be downloaded from the NN/LM training site at **http://www.nnlm.nlm.nih.gov/train**/for your needs. You can also contact the NER for a master copy for reproduction.

Notes and Practice
I use a brief one-page outline when teaching PubMed. The outline helps me stay on track. I can answer participant questions and refer back to my outline without skipping anything. Organize your notes in whatever way that works best for you.

Do a dry run where you will be teaching the course with all the technology that will be used. Have someone you trust act as your student and provide you with constructive comments regarding your presentation of the subject matter and instructional style. You will find this very helpful in revising your course and building confidence as a teacher.

Lighting the Candle vs. Burning it Out
When I took the MLA CE course *Teaching the Adult Learner in the Library Setting* (a highly recom- mended class), the instructor Nancy Press said "Teaching is not to fill the vessel, but to light the candle." I posted that quote over my computer at work. One day Geoffrey Gerrietts, our former NER Technology Coordinator, was doing some work on my PC and posted a rival quote. It stated, "Teaching is not to offer nourishment, but to burn out the student."

Lighting the candle versus burning out the student is a concern for most teachers, and especially for me. Remember it is not possible to cover every aspect of a topic. Learners are not going to retain everything that is taught. Be selective in what you cover and make sure it matches your learning objectives. If there is added information you feel is important to convey, but you do not have time during the class, include that material in your handouts and/or make it available on a Web page.

Your ultimate goal through preparation, solid learning objectives, and good handouts is to inspire your participants to make a change that will help them in their professional and/or personal lives. Once the course is over, they will still need your expertise, and one mark of your success will be their coming back to you for that help.

I hope these comments will be useful to you in developing and teaching your own training sessions. You can do it. Remember that the act of teaching itself is a learning experience. As the region's Educa- tion Coordinator, if I can be of any assistance or encouragement in your educational outreach efforts, please contact me.

Further Readings

Bell, Steven J. "Oh No! I Can't Get on the Web: Offline Strategies for Internet Content Presentations." <u>Searcher</u>. March 2000, pp. 54-65. Available online at **http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/mar00/bell.htm**

Burroughs, Catherine. <u>Guide to Planning, Evaluating and Improving Health Information Outreach</u> (DRAFT), NN/LM PNR, 2000. Available online at **http://www.nnlm.nlm.nih.gov/pnr/eval/**

Donnelly, Kimberley. "Reflections on What Happens When Librarians Become Teachers." <u>Computers in Libraries</u>. March 2000, pp. 46-49.

Masek, Linda E. "Advice for Teaching Hands-on Computer Classes to Adult Learners." <u>Computers in Libraries</u>. March 2000, pp. 31-36.

Mager, Robert F. <u>Preparing Instructional Objectives</u>. 2nd Ed. Belmont, CA: Fearon Publishers, 1975.

MLA/CHLA/ABSC 2000

GENERAL SESSIONS

GS1. **Welcome from the President of the Medical Library Association...**_Frieda O. Weise, AHIP. President, MLA;_ **Welcome from the President of the Canadian Health Library Association...**_Liz Bayley, president, CHLA/ABSC;_ **Welcome from the Pacific Northwest Chapter...**_Kimberley M. Granath, AHIP,Pacific Northwest Chapter;_ **Greetings from the European Association for Health Information and Libraries (EAHIL)...** _Elizabeth Husem, past president, EAHI;_ **Welcome from the 2000 National Program Committee (NPC)...**_Brett Kirkpatrick AHIP, chair, 2000 NPC; Joanne G. Marshall, Ph.D., AHIP associate chair, 2000 NPC; and Jim Henderson, chair, 2000 Local Assistance Committee;_ **Presidential Address...**_Frieda O. Weise, AHIP_

GS2. **Plenary Session I – The John P. McGovern Lecture...**_Introduction: Carol M. Gilbert, AHIP, member, 2000 NPC, director, Library Services, Helen L. DeRoy Medical Library, Providence Hospital and Medical Centers_ "Digital Doctoring: Health Online and the Empowered Medical Consumer"..._Tom Ferguson, M.D., adjunct associate professor, Health Informatics, University of Texas Health Science Center, Houston, TX_

GS3. **The Janet Doe Lecture...**_Introduction: Sherrilynne Fuller, Ph.D. director, Health Sciences Libraries, University of Washington, Seattle, WA_ "The Road Not Taken"..._Judith Messerle, AHIP, director, Countway Library of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA_

GS4. **National Library of Medicine Update**

GS5. **CISTI-Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information Update**

GS6. **Legislative Update**

GS7. **Plenary Session III – Introduction...**_Joanne G. Marshall, Ph.D. AHIP, associate chair, 2000 NPC, and dean and professor, School of Information and Library Science, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill_ "Demystifying Electronic Publishing: Revelations on the Revolution in Publishing"..._Paul Ginsparg, Ph.D., physicist, Los Alamos National Laboratory, NM; and Betsy L. Humphreys, AHIP, associate director, Library Operations, and assistant director, Health Services Research Information, National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, MD_

SECTION PROGRAMMING

1. **Chiropractic Libraries, Consumer and Patient Health Information, and International Cooperations Sections; and Complementary Medicine and Mental Health SIGs** – "Calming the Dragon: The Mind-Body Connection in Healing"

2. **Library Management and Leadership (formerly Medical School Libraries) Section** – "Approaches to Organizational Change: Library Services in Health Systems Mergers"

3. **Medical Library Education Section** – "Dragons Roar: New Perspectives – Special Contributed Paper Session for New Graduates and Current Students"

4. **Public Health/Health Administration, Collection Development, Research , and Technical Services Sections** – "Tracking and the ay Literature: Capturing the Elusive Dragon, Tracking the Noncommercially Published Literature and Making It Available"

5. **History of the Health Sciences and Medical Society Libraries Sections and Oral History Committee** – "Recording for the Future: Demystifying the Oral History Process"

6. **International Cooperation, Corporate Information Services, Pharmacy and Drug Information, and Public Services Section** – "Dragon, Draggin', and Dragoon: The Cultural Battle for International Copyright Protection"

7. **Pharmacy and Drug Information Section** – "The 2000 EMBASE Lecture: The Development of Photodynamic Therapy for Oncology, Ophthalmology, and Other Medical Indications at QLT Photo Therapeutics, Inc."

8. **Research, Collection Development, and Federal Libraries Sections** – "Evidence-Based Librarianship: Tools We All Can Use, Part 1"

9. **Cancer Librarians, Hospital Libraries, and Pharmacy and Drug Information Sections** – "Demystifying the Library: Expanding Horizons in End-User Training"

10. **Federal Libraries and Hospital Libraries Sections** – "Feng-shui for Surviving the Downsizing Dragon"

11. **Medical Informatics and Library Management and Leadership (formerly Medical School Libraries) Sections** – "Clinical Applications of Technologies: Linking Knowledge-Based Information to the Clinical Record"

insert

12. **Public Services and Medical Library Education Sections** – "On the Wings of the Dragon: Transforming Core Competencies into Practice: Developing Present and Future Information Services Professionals"
13. **Hospital Libraries Section** – "The Hospital Automation Forum: Hospital Libraries and the Internet in the New Millennium"
14. **International Cooperation Section** – "Getting Health Information to the World: International Programs at the National Library of Medicine"
15. **Library Management and Leadership (formerly Medical School Libraries) Section** – "You Never Stop Learning: Developing Leadership Skills Throughout Your Career"
16. **Veterinary Medical Libraries Section** – "Innovations and Collaborations in Veterinary Libraries: A Facilitated Network Session"
17. **Consumer and Patient Health Information Section** – "Moving Toward the Mainstream: Providing Consumer Health Information in the Community Setting"
18. **Educational Media and Technologies Section** – "Growth and Harmony, Part 1: Innovative Solutions to Networking Issues"
19. **Medical Informatics, Library Management and Leadership (formerly Medical School Libraries), and Public Health/Health Administration Sections** – "Life-Long Learning: Information Competencies for the Health Practitioner"
20. **Relevant Issues, Consumer and Patient Health Information, History of the Health Sciences International Cooperation, and Medical Society Libraries** – "East/West: Merging Trends in Medical Therapeutics"
21. **Hospital Libraries and Federal Libraries Sections** – "JCAHO and KBI – Using Them to Build Stronger Hospital Libraries"
22. **Nursing and Allied Health Resources and Dental Section** – "High Quality Clinical Studies in Nursing – Where Are They Published?"
23. **Technical Services and Hospital Libraries Sections** – "New Trends in Automated Library Systems"
24. **Veterinary Medical Libraries Section** – "SPARC and BioOne: New Alternatives for Scholarly Publishing"
25. **Educational Media and Technologies Section** – "Growth and Harmony, Part 2: Use of Technology to Design Space, Allocate Resources, and Organize Collections"
26. **National Program Committee** – "Strategic Approaches I: Special General Session Highlighting Critical Issues for the Future"
27. **National Program Committee** – "Strategic Approaches II: Special General Session Highlighting Critical Issues for the Future"
28. **Public Health/Health Administration and Nursing and Allied Health Resources Sections, and Outreach SIUG** – "Outreach to Public Health Professionals: Demystifying the Dragon of Population-based Service"
29. **Public Services and Hospital Libraries Sections** – "Weaving the Web: Creating and Managing the Web Databases, Effective Design and Management of Information-Rich Databases Accessible on the Web as Well as Team Projects"
30. **Consumer and Patient Health Information, Hospital Libraries, Nursing and Allied Health Resources, Public Health/Health Administration, and Relevant Issues Sections** – "Beyond Health Care: Healthy People in Healthy Communities in a Healthy World"
31. **Hospital Libraries and Library Management and Leadership (formerly Medical School Libraries) Sections** – "Collaborating to Create Opportunity: Building and Growing Consortia to Provide Resources"
32. **Research and Public Services Sections** – "Evidence-Based Librarianship: Tools We ALL Can Use, Part 2"

If you'd like to borrow one of these audiocassettes, please contact the office at 860-679-4500 or **sinkler@nso.uchc.edu**. You may borrow them for two weeks.

insert

Ideas for Outreach
by Nancy Putnam, Outreach Coordinator

Every year the NN/LM NER solicits outreach subcontract proposals and many exciting projects are submitted for review. You may at some time have considered doing an outreach project but either couldn't think of an idea or thought that a project would be too large and time consuming. There are many smaller scale projects that could improve services, increase recognition, and benefit your community, without a large impact to your budget or the need for funding.

For instance, after modifying the PubMed Basics brochure created by our office to reflect your library's contact information and services offered, you could place copies in doctors lounges, nursing stations and waiting rooms. This may encourage professional staff as well as patients to seek out information they did not know was available or at least make them aware that such information and services are available. If you have affiliated clinics outside of the hospital, drop off some brochures at those sites to publicize your services.

Contact your local senior center and provide information packets on locating health information. Encourage staff and residents to use your medical library if it is open to the public.

Partner with a Visiting Nurses Association (VNA) in your area to improve access to information for nurses and their patients.

Keep an eye out for news stories about controversial health topics. Create a packet of information for both the clinician and the general public on the latest health scare or concern. Send information packets to your local public health departments, public schools, public libraries, family medical practices and even the media. Of course, prominently place your hospital and library name on the packets to gain positive recognition.

Taking on a project will add to your every day workload, however the benefits of increased visibility to the library and hospital may help your cause when it's time for budget cuts. It is also fun to add a little something different to your usual work schedule.

Let us know if you have implemented an interesting outreach project for a minimal cost but optimal outcome that can be duplicated by other network members. We will share your ideas in future issues of the *New England Sounding Line.*

From the NAHSL dinner at MLA

New England Involvement at MLA 2000, Vancouver

Dartmouth College: Karen Odato, William Francis Garrity, Poster – *Library Grand Rounds: Meeting Clinicians On Their Own Turf*

Hartford Hospital: Janice Kaplan, Open Forum – *Best Practices Through Benchmarking;* Janice Kaplan, Paper- *Exercise Your Resources: A library initiative to provide easy access to information for three separate clinical staffs using a mix of information platforms*

Harvard Medical School: Judith Messerle, Award – *The 2000 Janet Doe Lectureship*

Manchester Memorial Hospital: Jeannine Cyr Gluck, Presentation – *Defense Against Downsizing: Connecticut hospital librarians and the CME review process*

Massachusetts Medical Society: Joe Elia, Panel – *The Big Picture: Intellectual property and peer review in new models of scholarly communication*

Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital: Anne M. Conner, Award – *EBSCO/MLA Annual Meeting Grant*

Tufts University: Elizabeth Eaton, Susan Albright, Paper – *Tufts Digital Curriculum: Converging power of a database and new technologies*

University of Connecticut Health Center: Hongjie Wang – Presentation – *Set your sites on MSDS providers*; Hongjie Wang – Paper – *Academic Mentorship: An effective professional development strategy for medical reference librarians*; Robin Ackley Hassig, Presentation – *Defense Against Downsizing: Connecticut hospital librarians and the CME review process*

University of Massachusetts Medical School: Deborah H. Sibley, Mary Piorun, Mary Ann Slocomb, Presentation – *Laptops: No dragon wires with wireless technology*; Mary Piorum, James F. Comes, Poster – *From A Paper Based System To A Database: Using Microsoft Access To Track Reference Desk Usage*

Yale University: Anne Okerson, Presentation – *Getting From Here to There*; Kathleen Bauer, Lynn Sette, Poster – *Reference Statistics: Rethinking data collection in the electronic age*; Daniel Chudnov, Gillian Goldsmith Mayman, Charles J. Greenbrg, Poster – *OSS4LIB: Open Source Systems For Libraries;* Charles J. Greenberg, Moderator – *Weaving the Web: Creating and managing the web databases, effective design and management of information – Rich Databases Accessible on the Web as Well as Team Projects*

Table of Contents from the NLM Technical Bulletin 2000 May-June

Portals: Personalized Service on the Web
by Pam White, Consumer Health Coordinator

Some of you planning to attend this fall's NAHSL conference, *Portals to Partnerships*, may be wondering what is a portal and what they have to do with partners. Portals facilitate research and communications. This latest wave in technology builds on a concept initiated by the likes of America Online and Compuserve. A portal enables users to modify the site according to their own preferences. Commercial search engines are helping to popularize the concept of tailor-made web sites.

Many of the identifying features of a portal are familiar to everyone who uses search engines. A portal includes a directory of links, organized by subject, as well as a search engine and communications tools. Communications features, such as chat rooms, free e-mail, and bulletin boards, increase the likelihood that individuals will return to a site again and again. Personalizable web pages, not necessarily available to others on the Internet, are what makes portals special. Yahoo, **http://my.yahoo.com/** is one example of a portal. Cornell, **http://mylibrary.cornell.edu/**, and California Polytechnic State Library, San Luis Obispo, **http://www.lib.calpoly.edu/mylib/cgi-bin/index.cgi**, are two libraries offering portals to library services.

Libraries have long been offering users the ability to link to personal information, e.g., circulation records, through their online catalogs. Now they are beginning to offer other personalized information accessible only to the individual user. Past reference requests and collaborative research opportunities are two types of information which can be tailored to users. Using a portal, a user can request a list of questions they have previously asked, which may help prevent redundant research. They may also use a portal to identify people who are doing similar research.

Partnerships can be crucial to the success of a portal. Contracts with private companies can relieve some of the pressure to design and maintain a portal. Agreements with other information providers to link web sites and services can draw in larger audiences to a site. This is important as libraries continue to expand beyond physical walls. Consortia can play a greater role in access to library resources by teaming subject specialists to work on regional web pages.

Developing and maintaining portals in-house allows a library more control over appearance and features in a portal. However, this requires a level of staffing and expertise many libraries do not have. Epicentric, **http://www.epicentric.com/solutions/b2c.asp**, and Autonomy Technology, **http://www.autonomy.com/**, are among the numerous companies available to assist with portal design and maintenance.

Portals facilitate mass communication and information gathering, while allowing users to customize a page with their own particular interests. Inviting users to participate in the design and evaluation process helps promote the site and contributes to its usability.

References:

Guenther, K. Customized data delivery through web portals: A case study. ONLINE 1999 Nov./Dec.: 51-56.

O'Leary, M. Portal wars. ONLINE 1999 Jan./Feb.: 77-79.

Strauss, H. What is a portal, anyway? CREN TechTalk inititated 1/20/00. **http://www.cren.net/know/techtalk/events/portals.html#questions** Accessed 7/10/00.

In this Issue:

Tweaks to PubMed

Until recently, the check box next to "Limits" on PubMed's features bar was always present whether or not any Limits had been selected. This was confusing to users.

Now the check box only appears (with a check inside) when Limits have been selected. You can still click on the checkbox, to remove the check, and run a search without Limits.

The New/Noteworthy feature in PubMed has returned. Look for this link on the blue sidebar, or try the URL: **http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov:80/entrez/query/static/new.html**

New/Noteworthy provides:
- brief descriptions of the latest PubMed enhancements (with links to Help for more detailed information)
- announcements of enhancements coming to PubMed in the future